

Message Text

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EXDIS

FOLLOWING SENTACTION STATE INFO PHNOM PENH FROM SEOUL

AUGUST 18, REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE:

S E C R E T SEOUL 5511

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, KS, CB

SUBJECT: LON NOL EMMISSARY'S VISIT TO ROK

REF: SEOUL 5331

1. ON AUGUST 14, LON NOL EMMISSARY, GENERAL SAT SUTSAKHAN, MET PRESIDENT PARK FOR 80 MINUTE MEETING. SUBSEQUENTLY FOREIGN MINISTRY, MINISTER OF DEFENSE YU, AND GENERAL SAT SUTSAKHAN HIMSELF DISCUSSED SUBSTANCE OF THAT MEETING WITH EMBASSY AND GENRAL STILWELL.

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2. IN ADDITION TO SEEKING GENERAL POLITICAL SUPPORT,

GENERAL SAT SUTSAKHAN MADE TWO SPECIFIC REQUESTS: FIRST, HE CONVEYED A DIRECT REQUEST FROM LON NOL FOR TECHNICIANS SKILLED IN THE MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT. GENERAL SAT SUTSAKHAN TOLD PRESIDENT PARK THAT LON NOL HAD MADE REQUEST FOR KOREAN TECHNICIANS TO GENERAL WEYAND DURING HIS VISIT TO PHNOM PENH. SECONDLY, HE REQUESTED EMERGENCY ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IN VERY GENERAL TERMS (MOFA TELLS US THIS REQUEST WAS VERY INDEFINITE AND PUT IN FUTURE TERMS AFTER PEACE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED).

3. FOREIGN MINISTRY TELLS US THAT, IN REPLY, PRESIDENT PARK TOLD GENERAL SAT SUTSAKHAN THAT HE HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN INFORMED OF, OR CONSULTED REGARDING, LON NOL REQUEST TO USG. PRESIDENT PARK SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND CHECK WITH THE U.S. SIDE, BUT IN ANY EVENT IT WOULD NOT BE "DESIRABLE" TO CONSIDER USE OF ANY ACTIVE DUTY ROK MILITARY PERSONNEL. ON QUESTION OF ANY EVENTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, PRESIDENT PARK SAID HE WELL UNDERSTOOD PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN RECONSTRUCTION AFTER A WAR AND ROKG WOULD DO WHAT IT COULD.

4. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH GENERAL STILWELL, GENERAL SAT SUTSAKHAN INTERPRETED PRESIDENT PARK'S REMARKS AS SHOWING SYMPATHY TO KHMER REQUEST FOR TECHNICIANS IN MILITARY SPECIALTIES.

5. ON ROKG SIDE, MOFA AND MND YU HAVE TAKEN VARYING VIEWS. ON AUGUST 17, YU MET WITH GENERAL STILWELL AT YU'S REQUEST. AFTER GIVING GENERAL STILWELL DESCRIPTION OF GENERAL SAT SUTSAKHAN'S DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT, YU INDICATED THAT THIS WAS "FIRST INFORMAL STEP" IN CONSULTATIONS. HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT USG REACTION HAD BEEN TO LON NOL'S REQUEST FOR KOREAN TECHNICIANS AS RELAYED BY GENERAL WEYAND. GENERAL STILWELL TOLD YU THAT THIS WAS CLEARLY A POLITICAL MATTER AND HE WOULD REPORT YU'S COMMENTS TO THE AMBASSADOR. HE ALSO TOLD YU THAT USG WAS PREVENTED FROM SUPPORTING THIRD COUNTRY PERSONNEL, MILITARY OR CIVILIAN, IN CAMBODIA. YU SAID HE UNDERSTOOD BUT SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS SOMETHING COULD BE DONE COVERTLY. GENERAL STILWELL POINTED OUT THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS IS ASSIDUOUS AND EFFECTIVE IN GUARDING AGAINST
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CIRCUMVENTION OF ITS RESTRICTIONS.

6. IN DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR, VICE FONMIN YUN WAS MORE CAUTIOUS IN SEEKING U.S. VIEWS OF KHMER REQUEST FOR ROK TECHNICIANS. IN REPLY TO AMBASSADOR'S QUERY, YUN STATED THAT ROKG WAS NOT AT THIS POINT ASKING FOR USG SUPPORT FOR, OR AGREEMENT TO, DISPATCH OF ANY KOREAN TECHNICIANS.

7. COMMENT: I DO NOT DOUBT THAT KOREANS WOULD BE WILLING TO CONSIDER SUPPLY OF MILITARY TECHNICIANS UNDER CIVILIAN COVER, PARTICULARLY IF U.S. UNDERWRITES OPERATION. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS PROPOSAL. THEREFORE SUGGEST I BE AUTHORIZED TO INFORM ROKG THAT WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN THE PROPOSITION AS THEY HAVE STATED IT EITHER IN TERMS OF OVERT OR COVERT OPERATIONS. WE SHOULD ALSO CAUTION THE KOREANS THAT WHILE ANY DECISION TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE WOULD BE THEIR OWN, NO MILITARY EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED TO KOREA BY THE U.S. COULD BE INVOLVED.
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UNQUOTE ROGERS

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